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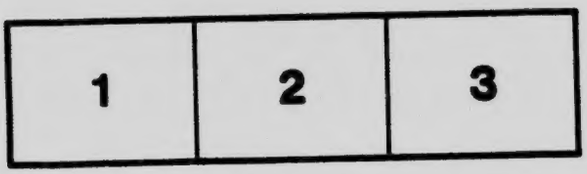

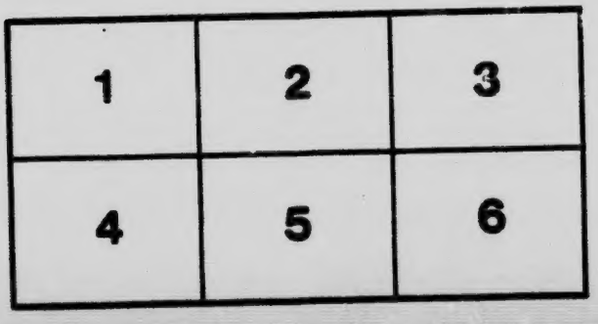

Compte Franc. Carré 107-108

Proportional Representation

and

Municipal Government

by

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Montreal

Reprinted from The Municipal World
May, 1920

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NOTE—The author of this article on Proportional Representation and Municipal Government is a consulting engineer specializing in street and road paving work, who at present is the Director of the Paving Department of the Milton Hersey Company, Limited, consulting engineers and chemists, whose main testing laboratories are located at Montreal and Winnipeg. He is an associate member of the Engineering Institute of Canada and the American Society of Civil Engineers, and a member of the International Federation of Technical Engineers', Architects' and Draftsmen's Unions of the American Federation of Labor. He has been associated with municipal government as a contractor, as a city commissioner of public works, and as a consulting engineer, all his life, and speaks from a broad knowledge of the defects of present day political organization.

Proportional Representation and Municipal Government

1. **American Municipalities:** Ever since James Bryce wrote his "American Commonwealth," we, this side of the Atlantic, both in the United States and Canada, have been painfully conscious of the fact that all is not well with our municipal governments. Many sincere men have faithfully employed their talents in an attempt to seek out and apply the remedy for the state of affairs pointed out to us, in a friendly way, by our very distinguished critic from across the water. Considerable headway has already been made; but most students of municipal affairs recognize that the longest stretch of road is still ahead.

2. **Autocracy Versus Democracy:** Speaking generally, we may say that there are but two major ideas of government abroad in the world to-day; government from the top down—Autocracy; and government from the bottom up—Democracy. On our side the globe, where tradition is but a comparatively small factor in our public affairs, we are not even interested in the autocratic theory of government; so we may as well confine our attention to the further possibilities of the democratic plan.

3. **Theory Versus Practice:** Now, saying that a government is democratic does not make it so; nor does believing it is democratic make it so. Neither does the fact that a government is democratic necessarily mean that it is a good government. Democracies are not always good; autocracies are not always bad. Also, there may be more real democracy under a form of autocracy; more real autocracy under a form of democracy. Words prove nothing. It is facts we want to-day; facts in international and national, provincial or state, county and municipal affairs alike. It is the fact of good government we now seek.

4. **Two Essentials are Involved:** There are those who will tell you that a good form of government will not necessarily produce good results; and that good men may secure good results even with a form of government which is not good. That is true; but to what conclusion does it lead except that there are two factors involved—the machinery and the operatives? Such remarks frequently emanate from those who have good financial reasons for preferring "things as they are"; and they are usually mere quibbles intended to befog the real issues.

5. **Good Machinery is Necessary:** Bad operatives with bad machinery are quite certain to come to grief, and bad operatives may spoil good machinery; while good operatives

may even succeed with bad machinery, and are quite certain to succeed with good machinery. Therefore, if you or I were starting to do a job in our own lines of industry, should we not first secure the very best machinery available, and then the very best operatives to handle it? Should we voluntarily neglect either essential? I think not. Then why apply to our community enterprises other than the same principles of good business which we follow in our private undertakings?

6. **Good Men Always Available:** Many of our best men can not be prevailed upon to accept public office in Canada and the States to-day, especially in the municipal field. Has it ever occurred to you to inquire into the underlying cause? If not, and you manage labor, may I suggest that upon arrival at your place of business to-morrow morning you offer some of your best operatives poor machinery with which to do piece work. No further inquiry will be necessary. Good men will not waste their valuable time with poor machinery if they can help it, especially if it looks like a hopeless task even to get the job done at all with the equipment provided. Get good governmental machinery, and good men will always be available for its working.

7. **Two Theories of Democracy:** By many thinkers, Democracy is divided into two classes—that is, the machinery for securing it is so divided. "Pure Democracy," as represented by the old New England town meeting, is one kind; "Representative Democracy," as most of us know it, is the other. Now no machinery of government has yet been constructed which will produce one hundred per cent true democracy, and most of us are lucky if we are even enjoying fifty per cent democracy.

8. **"Pure" Versus "Representative":** While, theoretically, "Pure Democracy" may seem to promise the best results, and many "parlor" reformers go into ecstasy talking about it, when the matter is considered from a distinctly practical viewpoint, I think there is little doubt that, except where very small groups are involved, "Representative Democracy" has actually come nearer securing for the people what they want. It is with this kind of democracy, and with its bearing upon municipal government, that we will now concern ourselves.

9. **Representative Democracy:** Representative Democracy should be exactly what those two words indicate: that is, government from the bottom up through a body of men who truly represent the underlying electorate. Otherwise, while we may have something which, by a stretch of the imagination, may be called a "Democracy," the use of the adjective "representative" is certainly misinforming. To paraphrase the illustrious Edmund Burke, I will say that the virtue, the spirit, and the essence of a representative body, be it called parliament, congress, commission, city council, or committees thereof, consists in such representative body be-

ing the express image, in miniature as to numbers, of the people which it represents.

10. **An Old Political Problem:** There have been many occasions in the past when the party polling the least number of votes has elected a majority of the representatives. A noteworthy instance occurred when Gladstone was hurled from power in 1886—by a minority; for though he had a popular majority of fifty-five thousand votes throughout the country, yet the election machinery seated a majority of one hundred and four members of the opposition in the House. Can such a government, by any form of sophistry, be said to represent and have a mandate from the people?

11. **Canada Needs the Solution:** In the general election of 1896, the Conservative party in Canada polled eleven thousand more votes than did the Liberal party; but nevertheless the Liberals obtained a majority of thirty seats in the Canadian House of Commons. Such fluke results of the present method of conducting elections, and the political conditions growing out of it, caused Earl Grey, writing to the London "Times" on April 3rd, 1917, to say: "In Canada, the necessity of the two contending political parties to obtain an electoral majority in every district is a corrupting influence which poisons the life of the people from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

12. **Canada Seeks the Solution:** The recent Royal Commission on Industrial Relations perceived this corrupting and disintegrating political influence observed earlier by Earl Grey, and made to the Government suitable recommendations with respect to Proportional Representation. On July 5th, 1919, Sir Robert Borden, from his place in Parliament, referring to Proportional Representation, said: "I recognize its importance, and I will be prepared to have a Speaker's Conference appointed at the next session of Parliament."

13. **Parliamentary or Direct Action:** The Ottawa "Citizen" of June 14th, 1919, does not beg the question when it says: "If, for any reason, Parliament is not truly representative, the popular mind becomes disconnected from constitutional government, and the tendency is for sections of the people to seek a solution of their difficulties by extra-parliamentary means, or, in other words, by Direct Action." When any considerable section of the underlying electrate is unrepresented in a governing body, that body has lost its moral authority; and the unrepresented electors are apt to feel not morally bound by the laws it makes, even though force may compel them to obey.

14. **A World Safe for Democracy:** The sooner we learn that the way to "make the world safe for democracy" is to make democracy "safe" for the people, the better it will be. Otherwise, as is already happening in other lands, the uncomfortable minorities, and even majorities, who are suppressed by our present system of elections, may make it very unpleasant for some of us. My keen interest in this subject at the

present time may possibly be due to the fact that I fully recognise these possibilities, and that I do not want either to be made uncomfortable or to have it made unpleasant for me.

15. **Proportional Representation:** Representation in any governing body, to be proportional, must give to each group of voters in the electorate who think together, a number of representatives in that governing body in direct proportion to their relative numbers in the total electorate. That is, a group consisting of twenty per cent of the underlying electorate should have twenty per cent of the representatives. If there are to be one hundred men in the governing body, that group should have twenty of these. It seldom does.

16. **Unproportional Representation:** To show how very unproportional the representation can be, and often is, under the present system of conducting elections, we may take as an example a city with five wards of one hundred votes each and each electing two aldermen. One ward may be about one hundred per cent Conservative, and elect two Conservative aldermen. The other four wards may each be divided about forty per cent Conservative and sixty per cent Liberal, in which case they will elect eight Liberal aldermen.

17. **Minority Elects Majority:** In other words, a minority of forty-eight per cent of the electors have eighty per cent of the representatives; which is a large majority and out of all proportion to their voting strength, going to make up a governing body that is thoroughly unrepresentative. With two parties in the field, it is mathematically possible for fifty-one per cent of the voters to elect all the representatives; with three parties in the field, thirty four per cent could secure all the representation.

18. **Reaction Always a Unit:** The old trick of splitting the opposition party's vote is too well known to need explanation. The reactionaries seldom suffer from this; for, having no principles, there is nothing for them to differ about except the destination of the "swag," and they will always come to terms for the division of this in their own camp rather than risk losing it altogether. It is the liberal, progressive, or radical vote which is usually split where there is no arrangement for proportional representation. Under other systems, the more tickets that are in the field, the smaller is the minority of reactionaries required to control the election and lord it over the more progressive majority.

19. **No Representation At All:** Then enters the question as to what representation on the governing body previously described have the thirty-two per cent of Conservative voters who were losing minorities in the four wards that returned Liberal aldermen. Certainly the two Conservative aldermen returned from the first ward cannot represent them, for they did not vote for these men at all, and may have strong objections to them personally; and the Liberal aldermen elected from their own wards certainly do not represent them, for, while they may think very highly of these men personally, they have voted against them on principle.

20. **Experience is Best Teacher:** My own experience is that, though I have been voting industriously ever since I was twenty-one years old, sometimes travelling a distance to do so, never yet have I had a representative on any governing body. I have always been misrepresented by men against whom I purposely voted, and this sort of "representation" I most emphatically repudiate. At times, almost forty-nine per cent of the electorate have voted for the same candidate as I, and yet we have had to be misrepresented by the other man.

21. **The Consent of the Governed:** Despite all the bitterness of our political contests, in this country we are fortunate in possessing a general agreement, at least in form, as to the basis of government. With us, the consent of the governed is accepted as the one possible foundation on which a government can be based; and the criticisms which men of different parties pass on the present state of affairs all take this as their starting point. That popular consent is necessary, all agree.

22. **Machinery Has Been Neglected:** Now, under these conditions, isn't it a remarkable thing that so little heed is given to the all-important machinery by which the consent of the governed is to be expressed. Certainly machinery which produces governing bodies that misrepresent or totally fail to represent the electorate does not meet the need of the hour. Its weaknesses being pointed out, and a suitable remedy suggested, should we not proceed to avail ourselves of that remedy?

23. **Gerrymandering Impossible:** To the politically uninitiated, the word gerrymander does not seem very dangerous; but anyone who has ever been interested in the mechanics of elections knows otherwise. A politician named Gerry found that, by dividing a geographical area so his expected majorities would always be slight and his opponents' majorities heavy, he could gain a very considerable unfair advantage that would give to him offices to which the total popular vote did not entitle him. In other words, he found that, by cleverly juggling the boundary lines of his single member districts, he could frequently defeat the will of the people when they were against him. This is practically impossible under proportional representation.

24. **The Multi-Member District:** When a constituency returns only one member, the representation can not be apportioned; but necessarily falls to a single party, sometimes, in fact often, by a plurality which is not a majority. When constituencies return several members, it is possible to give representation within each electoral area to more than one party, so gerrymandering does not work. To-day, the possibility of rigging the election machinery to produce certain results which certain private interests may wish, against the popular will, are so great that shrewd, unscrupulous men spend a lifetime at its study and grow rich as professional politicians. Under proportional representation this particular

type of politician,—and a most dangerous type he is, always working under cover,—will be permanently disabled.

25. **No Primaries are Required:** With proportional representation, no primaries are required. Under the Hare system, the method of marking and counting the ballots brings together the votes of like-minded electors,—far more effectively than a primary election can do it,—so as not only to elect the strongest candidates of each party, group, or sufficient number of voters, whether organized or not. Candidates are nominated by petition, the number of names required on a petition being usually between one-half of one to two per cent of the voters in the constituency.

26. **Method of Voting is Simple:** The form of ballot used and the method of voting it are both very simple; more simple in practice than may be described in words. When proportional representationists are lecturing, it is frequently their custom to hold a mock election with the audience as a constituency, to demonstrate just how simple the system really is. Therefore, I will leave the reader's final conversion for one of these meetings, where he can learn by experience.

27. **Fear Splitting Party Vote:** Another serious objection to the single-member constituency is the fear of splitting the party vote, which limits each party to running one candidate only, so that the elector, in nine cases out of ten, has only two machine-nominated candidates from which to make a selection. This limited choice affords the voter no satisfactory opportunity for giving expression to his views. He must swallow the entire menu of one party or the other, or stay away from the polls; which largely accounts for the lack of interest in present day elections.

28. **Vote For, Not Against, Something:** To-day, we usually vote against something; not for something. In the old South of the United States they have regularly voted the Democratic ticket against the Republican North, even, as one old southern colonel was heard to say, if the party ran a dead yellow dog on it. The ballot applied after this fashion can have but little constructive force.

29. **Cleaner Election Campaigns:** Much evidence can be produced to show that proportional representation invariably results in cleaner elections. Professor Dupriez, of Louvain University, when speaking at a dinner given in his honor by the Proportionalists of New York City in 1915, at which the writer had the honor to be present, said that, since its introduction in Belgium, electoral campaigns have gained in dignity, that corruption is almost entirely eliminated, and that now one scarcely ever sees the rioting and violence with which elections too often used to end in the larger Belgian cities.

30. **Man Not Pitted Against Man:** The reason for this is fairly obvious. In the multi-member constituency, one candidate is not pitted against another in such a manner that to win he must necessarily defeat an opponent, for the simple

reason that every candidate who has a following in his district equal to the necessary quota is certain of election. This would obviate most of the causes of the "mud-slinging" which so disgraces political campaigns under the present system.

31. **Gives Freedom to Electors:** No one can seriously contend that, under our present system of elections, the electors really choose the candidates they want. The men for whom they are asked to vote are largely chosen for them by a party caucus; and both party platforms may contain some planks which they approve and others of which they disapprove. It is not always possible, under the present system, to vote for a Liberal who is in favor of both free trade and prohibition.

32. **Voting at Cross Purposes:** Frequently, in order to vote for prohibition, for instance, the elector is now compelled to vote for a protective tariff, even though he is only less bitterly opposed to it than to the demon rum. He must, therefore, either stultify himself on one or the other important issue, or stay away from the polls. Such is not the case where proportional representation is in use. He may have the choice between a Liberal who does and a Liberal who does not believe in prohibition.

33. **Brings Political Harmony:** Wherever proportional representation has been introduced, it has brought a measure of political harmony not otherwise attainable. In Belgium, before its adoption, the non-representation of racial and religious minorities was seriously threatening the peace of the country. Said Count Goblet d'Alviella, then vice-president of the Belgian Senate, in 1899: "Belgium was on the eve of a revolution,—a revolution which was only avoided by the immediate and complete introduction of proportional representation into parliamentary elections." The result has been the political consolidation of Belgium.

34. **Canada's Ontario Versus Quebec:** The same conditions which formerly existed in the "cockpit of Europe" to-day exist, in a less aggravated form, in Canada, where we have our "solid" Quebec and our "solid" Ontario duplicating Belgium's "solid" Flanders" and "solid" Wallony. These conditions also exist as between the French and English speaking inhabitants of many of the Quebec cities. Proportional representation is a remedy which should satisfy both elements in the population, as it did in Belgium.

35. **A Belgian Statesman Testifies:** Mr. Georges Lorand, the Radical leader in the Belgian Chamber of Representatives, has said: "We have used proportional representation for thirteen years, and we have had six general elections with the new system, and the result is that not a single party nor fraction of a party is opposed to the reform; its extension is inscribed in the programme of all the parties. It has been said, by opponents of proportional representation, that it would lead to the splitting of parties, but it has had the opposite effect; parties, far from splitting into fragments, have brought their ranks closer together, but within these

ranks they have found room for such diversity of opinion as may exist, may, as is essential within any living and active political force."

36. **It Works Even in Ireland:** Would you say that a system of elections which had brought a measure of political harmony in Ireland was a good system and worth your consideration? Then listen to this editorial from the Dublin "Times," referring to the municipal elections held under proportional representation last January in the town of Sligo: "Before the extension of the franchise under the Local Government Acts, the Sligo corporation was almost exclusively Unionist, with results not wholly satisfactory. That extension gave the Nationalists a complete monopoly, with results utterly disastrous.

37. **After a Rake's Progress:** "After a rake's progress, which was unprecedented even in Ireland, the town went bankrupt. The election has established, beyond dispute, two big things in favor of proportional representation. The first is that it is a thoroughly workable system. The other big thing—and it is really big—is the proof that in proportional representation we have the Magna Charta of political and municipal minorities."

38. **Geography Versus Opinions:** From the above, we see that the present method of conducting elections by the majority system does not give us a truly representative governing body; in fact, the members rather represent the geography of the country than the thought and desires of its people. Therefore, is it not incumbent upon us, as good citizens, so to amend our governing machinery that it will represent the people properly by letting those who think together elect a representative who thinks as they do? Proportional representation does this, and does it remarkably well as a matter of practical politics. It is a proven theory, not an experiment.

39. **Commission Form of Government:** Strange to say, some of the first attempts to improve North American municipal governments had a trend away from and not towards representative democracy. The early charters granted to what are called commission form of government cities nearly always provided that the commissioners—which is but another name for aldermen that does not necessarily make them smell the sweeter—should be elected at large and by plurality or majority vote. This abolished the ward system; but, as we shall see, made no improvement upon it in the direction of democracy.

40. **Minority Control Possible:** The commissioners need not even be elected by a majority in most cases, and frequently are not where more than two parties are in the field. This form of governing body always means a large unrepresented minority at least; and, not infrequently, entirely unrepresented large majorities are ruled over by a body composed of the candidates of a minority party which

chanced to get more votes than either one of two or more other parties.

41. **Unrepresentative Commissions:** This led to some unrepresentative commissions which were not very successful, in spite of the cities having adopted the commission form of government; and it caused a loss of interest on the part of the electorate when they found that their machinery would not operate properly to carry out their will as expressed in the voting. Such elections have retarded the progress of the commission form of government movement very greatly.

42. **Accidental Representation:** In many respects, the old ward system was superior to this new system which abolished the wards and instituted election at large, from a multi-member district, without providing for proportional representation; for the old ward system did, in a way, give a kind of accidental representation, unsatisfactory and unreliable though it was. Working class wards usually returned candidates at least acceptable to a majority of the working class, and the more prosperous wards did likewise; while, under the system of electing at large by majority or plurality, frequently no commissioners acceptable to the working class were returned at all, and this has proved the serious weakness of this type of commission government for cities.

43. **Representing Sleeping Groups:** But why vote as we sleep? Under the ward system, the alderman is supposed to represent all the citizens who sleep in his ward, but who may differ widely as the poles in their views on municipal policies. These citizens are usually agreed on nothing save the interests of their section of the city, and that is why the alderman so often considers and votes upon municipal problems in the light of the interests of his ward only. Under this system, the public-spirited may find their votes completely nullified by the votes of those who have accepted favors from the ward "boss"; the citizen possesses the right to vote, but not the right, which the franchise was intended to confer, to choose a representative.

44. **Adjoining Streets or Thoughts:** Where there have been seven wards each selecting one alderman, and the system is changed to proportional representation, with one district or ward selecting seven aldermen, one-seventh of the citizens would equally be entitled to one-seventh of the representation; but the character of the constituency is changed; it is no longer a seventh who live in adjoining streets and think differently; it is a seventh who may live in different parts of the city but are agreed in their views on municipal questions. The greatest good to the greatest number is more apt to be the aim of a representative body selected according to the thought of the community than of one chosen by its inhabitants according to the streets upon which they live.

45. **Democracy not Sacrificed:** Proportional representation makes it possible to adopt the commission manager

form of government for cities without sacrificing democracy. A body elected by this method is sure to be representative of the minds of the voters. It is, therefore, fit to be entrusted—subject to recall of course—with the great powers necessary to combine excellence and efficiency, including, if it is thought best, the power to select the chief administrator.

46. **The Cure is More Democracy:** Verily, the cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy; and no other remedy offered seems so certain to produce immediate and satisfactory results as the adoption of a method of election which will secure true proportional representation in the body of legislators entrusted with the democratic representation of the public. This reform does not in any way interfere with the introduction of any other reforms such as the initiative, referendum, and recall, or direct legislation. It can not but add to their chances of success where they are tried.

47. **A Single Transferable Vote:** If I were asked for the one thing, possible to-day, which would do more than any other to block the "expert" work of the professional vote-getting politician who makes a party and sometimes a private business of the public's affairs, I should, without hesitation, say that it was the adoption of the single transferable vote which is used to secure proportional representation. One marks his ballot for the man whom he prefers to have represent him in the governing body; and then proceeds to mark his second, third, and as many other choices as he may care to name. His vote counts for some one of these men whom he prefers.

48. **This Vote is Never Wasted:** If one's first preference has already secured a seat by having received a full quota at the time one's ballot is reached by the enumerators, and therefore does not need the vote, then that vote is made to operate in favor of one of the elector's other preferences, the one highest in his list of preferences who can be helped to election by his vote. The single transferable vote is not wasted, as are all the unsuccessful votes under either the plurality or the majority systems based on geographical divisions.

49. **Each Vote Elects Someone:** Unless the minority opinion which it represents is so small that it does not succeed in getting even the quota necessary to elect one representative, each vote elects someone under the voter's orders. Even then, if the elector has named as his second choice a candidate of one of the larger parties nearest in principle to his own ideas, his vote will count to that extent.

50. **How it Works Out in Cities:** In most municipalities, the corporate limits are not so extensive but that the election may be handled as one district, and the representatives elected at large therefrom, proportionately. Even with proportional representation, however, necessity dictates geographical divisions in some cases, and very large cities may be divided into two or more electoral sections; but these

multi-member districts are always made very much larger than is practical under the plurality and majority systems, and must each elect at least three representatives. The larger the district, and therefore, the more representatives elected from that district, the more satisfactorily proportional representation can be worked out.

51. **Small Minorities Important:** For instance, where three members are elected, a minority of at least one-third will have one of them; and where ten members are elected, a minority of at least one-tenth will be able to make itself heard in the governing body through its one member. There is a saying that the farthest advanced thinker is always a minority of one; and, while it is not practical to give this one man proportional representation, even though he be the world's greatest genius and destined to be written down in the pages of history, it is practical to give representation to all considerable minorities which are real factors in present day affairs.

52. **Accident Versus Science:** While the ward system, as I have already shown, frequently gives a sort of accidental and disproportionate representation to the minorities in the community, sometimes more and sometimes less than that to which they are proportionately entitled, does it not seem that we have left such matters to accidents long enough? The results of this accidental misrepresentation system have been pointed out in numerous cases; and the scientific remedy is available, developed theoretically for us by unselfish men who had the public good at heart, and now tried in practice and proven satisfactory. Is there any possible good reason why we should longer delay the adoption of proportional representation?

53. **Partisan or Non-Partisan:** Some will say that they believe in the party system and want to know if it is possible under a proportional representation election. It is. The principle of the party system will always be with us. I never knew such staunch partisans as took part in the several "non-partisan" election campaigns that I have witnessed. I believe in the partisan system of government—for it is said that one cannot be both fish and fowl—but I believe that partisan government will be best accomplished, and most of the present day evils of partisan politics eliminated, when we elect our representatives by the system of proportional representation. We may then have partisan politics without having tricky partisan politicians in the use we now too frequently know them.

54. **Stabilizing our Politics:** One of the best features about proportional representation is the effect it has in stabilizing governments. At present, a small shift in votes may throw one party out and another party into the full control without even a healthy opposition. With proportional representation, the same shift may change a majority party to a minority party, but their strengths after the elec-

tion will have been changed only in proportion to the actual shifts in public opinion as indicated by the voting.

55. **Keeping Good Men in Office:** Also, a good man, who has behind him a large number of the citizens constituting more than the necessary quota to elect, will be assured of continued public service if he so desires; for a slight change in the strength of his following will not throw him out of the governing body. If there are ten men to be elected, as long as he has behind him at least ten per cent of the votes, he will retain his seat. To-day, he usually requires over fifty per cent of the votes in his own small district, and can not go out of the district for support without abandoning it completely for another.

56. **Lack of Representation Dangerous:** Some thoughtless people will say that we do not want certain elements in our population represented in the governing bodies; but every thoughtful man knows that, as a matter of political safety alone, such a condition of affairs is dangerous. Do you think Russia would have had her sudden and unpleasant turnover except for the suppression of both minorities and majorities that has existed there for generations?

57. **The "Red" and "White" Terrors:** The "red terror" is always preceded by a "white terror"; and, if the "red terror" temporarily fails, as in Poland, Siberia, Hungary, Germany, and elsewhere, it is invariably followed by a reign of "white terror" which makes the "red terror" look just light pink by comparison. The "red" Russians under Lenine and Trotzky were so far outdistanced by the "white" Poles under Mannerheim that it makes the former look like a pair of Sunday school teachers.

58. **We Want Neither Terrorism:** If we do not want the "red," then the voice of wisdom dictates, even if conscience does not, that we avoid introducing the "white." The "reds" are already pointing out that in their opinion the "white terror" is already quite far advanced in the United States and Canada, specially the former; and, sad to relate, they have some facts with which to support their contention. The persecution of the "reds" has already gone so far that such reputable organs of Conservatism as the New York Times, Tribune and World, and others, are crying out in alarm.

59. **In Parliament, Not in Jail:** If, instead of persecuting these "reds," we gave them a chance to expound their ideas in public, from the seats in representative bodies to which they are justly entitled, instead of compelling them to expound them, with three-fold force, from our jails, would it not be safer for us? In parliaments, the representatives of such minority elements will be isolated, subject to the majority; and there is nothing like isolation in full view of the public to destroy corruption and the conditions in which it breeds.

60. **Why the Many Censorships:** Many are to-day asking, for instance: "Why, if the Russian Soviet government

is so bad, are we prevented from getting a good look at it?" Cannot the public be depended upon to agree with the censor about what is good and what is bad? What harm, in a free country, if someone advocates violence? Are the majority of us so insane that we are apt to employ violence if there is nothing in the facts to justify it? Are we a free republic, or are we not?

61. **Sitting on the Safety Valve:** Do we wish to go on sitting upon our own safety valve after such political blow-outs as the Winnipeg strike, in Canada, and the coal and steel strikes, in the United States, have given us notice that the pressure is getting too high and that something is wrong? There is no use attributing these unhappy affairs to foreign agitators; for neither foreign nor domestic agitators can for long thrive in a soil where conditions are as they should be. Besides, of the ten "foreign agitators" now being tried at Winnipeg, six are English, two Scotch, and two of Canadian birth.

62. **Repression not a Remedy:** When we deport or imprison one man, ten younger and more effective men step forward to take his place. The dreaded I. W. W., whose principles are more dangerous by far to the established order in industry than those of any other labor organization the world over, is thriving in the United States on a form of persecution of which the late Russian Czar might have been proud; and where is the Russian Czar and his government now?

63. **Something Else is Needed:** Something else than repression is necessary; and our legislative bodies must be made so workable that they will find and apply the proper remedy before it is too late. How are legislators to really know conditions unless these high pressure minority forces are represented amongst them? Making "martyrs" was proven a useless remedy long ago; for the blood of martyrs is now, as it was in the days of the early Christians, but the seed of the faith, whatever that faith may be.

64. **The Majority Should Rule:** While it is true that in most cases the majority should rule, that majority should be a majority of the people, or of the representatives of those people. If a governing body represents only the majority, and the majority of that body controls, you may have the worst kind of minority rule, which, in fact, we frequently have to-day. Sixty per cent of sixty per cent, a majority of a majority, is not a majority of the whole, but a majority of that part of the whole which is the first sixty per cent. It is, in fact, a minority or thirty-six per cent; thirty-six men out of one hundred. It is by such minorities, and many far worse, that we are frequently ruled to-day.

65. **Minority Rule Worst Sort:** Add to this difficulty the work of political tricksters, and of our minority elections, which prevail so generally, and one sees why democracy, as practiced to-day, so often does not "democ," but falls by the wayside. President Wilson, when first elected, only repre-

sented a minority of the voters in the United States, having been elected by the plurality system through the splitting of the Republican vote and the total loss of the small parties' votes. When he was next elected it was still by minority, though this minority was so large as to almost amount to a majority of all the voters, there being no division of the Republican party at that time, the Progressive party having practically disappeared.

66. **The Rights of Minorities:** Someone may object to my statement that the majority should rule "in most cases"; but I wish to stand by that statement. Under some conditions, if you or I were in the minority, and the majority should wish to impose certain legislation and enforce it, the only way they could ever succeed would be over our prostrate bodies. For the purpose of better illustration, we may take an exaggerated case. Suppose, for instance, a majority of sixty per cent should decide that a minority of forty per cent must remain in a condition of abject slavery. Would we, in case we were a part of that forty per cent minority, submit willingly to the will of the majority? I think not.

67. **Majority Should be Tempered:** A lack of consideration by the majority for the rights of the minority is much less likely when that minority is represented and can be heard in the governing body. Great Britain is to-day suffering severely because the Laborites got only one representative for every two they should have had under a truly proportional system of voting; and, to-day, "direct action" in England is an unpleasant possibility, despite the success which the English people, for generations back, have had in securing their demands to at least a considerable extent through parliamentary channels. Where the minorities have their correct representation on the governing body, the action of the majority is much more likely to be tempered by reason.

68. **Opinion of Mr. Asquith:** The Right Honorable H. H. Asquith once said: "It is infinitely to the advantage of the House of Commons that there should be no strain of opinion honestly entertained by any substantial body of the King's subjects which should not find there representation and speech." We might add that not only should all such opinions be found in every body which professes to be representative, but it should be present in as near the exact proportion it represents as may be practically possible.

69. **The Commission Manager Form:** Where cities are concerned, as I said before, the first move for improved governments was not in the direction of more democracy, but less; and many of these governments failed for that reason. The city manager has been added as an improvement to the commission form; but even that did not help if the commission was not right. To-day, all practical municipal reformers are urging the commission manager form of government, with the commissioners, or aldermen, or councilmen, which-

ever you may care to call them, elected by proportional representation.

70. **The National Municipal League:** The National Municipal League, of which Mr. Clinton Rogers Woodruff, who but recently spoke before the Canadian Club in Montreal, is secretary, has prepared a model charter along these lines, and are advocating it for adoption, with local amendments, for all cities. Some cities are already operating under this form of charter.

71. **Ashtabula and Kalamazoo:** Two cities in the States who have adopted this most modern machinery of municipal government are Ashtabula, Ohio, and Kalamazoo, Michigan; and each is pleased with its new form of government. At Ashtabula, which was the first American city to adopt it, after the first election was over, even those papers which had opposed the new machinery as being too complicated, admitted that it had been the best election the city had ever held and had produced the best results. It seems that in this case the representation worked out remarkably well, and every interest of any considerable group of voters in the city found itself quite satisfactorily represented. Even the "wets" and the "drys" admitted that they had all the representation to which they were entitled, and called it a square deal.

72. **Boards of Trade and Clubs:** It is of interest to note that many private clubs employ the proportional representation principle for electing their directors and committees; and many Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce do likewise. They find it works out more satisfactorily than any other method. Possibly some of the like organizations in your city already use this method of electing. If not, wouldn't it be possible for you to introduce this reform into your own club affairs and thereby set the citizens a good example by handling your own small representative democracy scientifically.

73. **The Sources of Information:** If you need help in starting the new system, it may readily be had from either the American Proportional Representation League, Mr. Clarence G. Hoag, secretary-treasurer, 1417 Locust Street. Philadelphia, or the Proportional Representation Society of Canada, Mr. Ronald Hooper, honorary secretary, 13 Second Street, Ottawa, of both of which I am a member. In Montreal, Mr. Howard S. Ross, K.C., Coristine Building, is an able exponent of the single transferrable vote. By all means, do not try to frame a law to introduce proportional representation without consulting those who know it best.

74. **Democracy is Now on Trial:** The world is in a turmoil to-day. Some say that we fought for democracy, but haven't got it; others say—and not without some apparent facts to back them up—that democracy, as we have worked it, is a failure. At any rate, democracy is, as never before, on trial for its life. Shall we, who believe in democracy, go into the final battle with antiquated machinery which fur-

nishes a product that can not, for instance, stand the light of free speech, a free press, and free assembly?

75. **Denial of Rights Dangerous:** Our present governments are compelled to deny these rights for the very reason that they have not functioned properly and have not truly represented the people's interests, but have more frequently represented "the" people, which "the" is usually spelled with capital letters. It is idle to talk of what we will do to the submerged minorities when, driven to desperation, they apply "direct action" and rebellion stalks abroad in the land. Our own British ancestors have accomplished too many non-pacifist revolutions,—and revolutions are but successful rebellions,—for us to be confident that in this generation we can, if we tarry too long, prevent a change in government from coming that way.

76. **The Way Changes are Made:** There are only two ways in which changes in government are accomplished. Either they are evolved through constitutional means, by the government responding to the needs of the people—which is the intelligent way; or, if the government is not sufficiently representative and pliable to change with the needs of the people, and retards the necessary progress, then the change comes about by violent means—revolution—the unintelligent way that always exacts its full penalty of human misery.

77. **Real Patriots Must Act:** We hear much talk these days of "patriots" and "traitors." Whenever I hear a man use these words, I always ask myself, "Patriotic to what?" "A traitor to what?" For myself, I am unwilling to be a "patriot" to the profiteers, and I am perfectly willing to be a "traitor" to them. Real patriotism consists in earnestly desiring and being willing to fight for the good of one's country, even to the extent, as has been the case many times in past history, of being willing to overthrow, violently if necessary, a "traitorous" government.

78. **Lincoln on Governments:** In this connection it might be well for some of our self-styled "patriots" who, to my mind, are the worst enemies of good government in the country, to remember that the great and genuine American patriot, Abraham Lincoln, in his first inaugural address, said: "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it."

79. **Dissatisfaction a Healthy Sign:** It should be noted, I think, that Lincoln spoke of the people who "inhabit" the country; not merely the people who "own" it politically and otherwise. I do not believe this great man was ever heard to say: "Well, if they don't like our institutions, let them get out." He himself did not like the institution of chattel slavery, but, instead of getting out of the country, he remained to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. Dissatisfaction,

while not a sign of health, is yet a healthy sign. It shows that the country is at least not dying of its maladies, but is fighting for a recovery.

80. **Prepare for Troublous Times:** There are dangerous times ahead of us. Something is happening in the world which very few people understand, and great changes seem to lie directly in our path. What these are to be and where they will lead, probably no one of us can even guess; but all of us who are really democrats want these changes, whatever they are, to be accomplished peaceably, by force of argument and not by force of arms. We have had enough of bloodshed; besides, there is never a way of telling whose blood will flow.

81. **A Seditious Document?:** However, we should always bear in mind some statements found in the American Declaration of Independence; though many of our American friends now seem to think that their revolutionary forefathers were really "seditious" traitors and not the grand and glorious "patriots" represented in their school histories —at least, we must come to the conclusion that they now so think if we judge them by some of their recent activities in the line of suppression of the minorities who believe the time has arrived for a reassertion of the following words.

82. **Declaration of Independence:** "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal: That they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and among these are life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

"That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute depotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security."

83. **City Government Important:** City government, though to some it seems not so important, is really a large factor in influencing our daily lives. What affects us more than housing, water supply, sewage, and so forth? The lives and happiness of our families depend largely upon these municipal activities. What more important than marketing conditions and the food supply? In time of stress, "the staff of life" must be handled largely by the municipalities acting in conjunction with the Provincial and Dominion Governments. Besides, where do revolutions start but in the cities; and are not city folk usually the greatest sufferers when things happen this way?

84. **Progress for Municipalities:** These are the days for every municipality to be getting its political house in the best possible order. Progress is the watchword of the times, for the world is in a state of flux, and those who will not go forward are likely to be pushed back. As one who has long been interested in municipal governments, and who has had the pleasure of serving in many of them, I would like to see our municipalities forge ahead—not wait until it becomes absolutely necessary before adopting proportional representation as a means of electing their municipal governing bodies. This reform should be adopted by the present majority; which, if it does not, will not deserve of the minority grown to majority that justice which it formerly denied.

85. **Directors Appoint Managers:** If a governing body elected by proportional representation, or board of directors for the city we might call it—will then follow the corporate practice of appointing one responsible manager with authority to act under the general direction of the board, I think there will be occasion for much less concern on the part of citizens about what their municipal government is going to do next. This manager is "hired" and "fired" by the board. Who else but the public would have a manager whom they could not "hire" and "fire" at will; certainly no business house has such.

THE END

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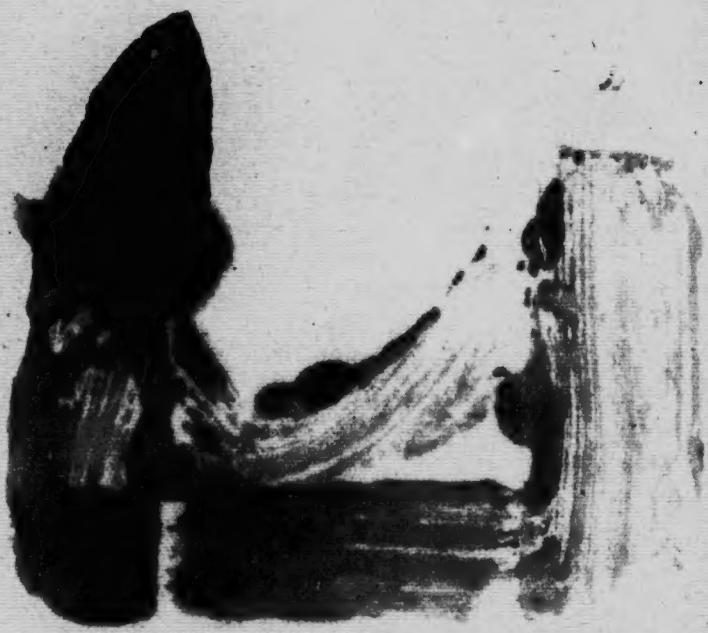
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